

Amendments to the Claims:

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) A method of milling cerium compound by means of a ball mill using a milling medium, characterized in that ratio H_b/r of radius r of a cylindrical ball mill container and depth H_b of the milling medium in the ball mill container disposed horizontally ranges from 1.2 to 1.9, and the ball mill container is rotated at a rotational speed which is 50% or less of critical rotational speed $N_c = 299/r^{1/2}$ of the ball mill container converted from the radius r expressed in centimeter, compound, comprising:

providing the cerium compound and a milling medium in a cylindrical ball mill container of a ball mill, the milling medium having a H_b/r ratio between 1.2 and 1.9 where H_b is the depth of the milling medium in the ball mill container and r is the radius of the ball mill container; and

rotating the ball mill container at a rotational speed 50% or less of a critical rotational speed of the ball mill container, the critical rotation speed being defined as $N_c = 299/r^{1/2}$ where N_c is expressed in rpm and r is expressed in cm.

2. (Currently Amended) The method of milling cerium compound according to claim 1, wherein the milling of the cerium compound is carried out ~~in wet process or dry process,~~ as a wet process.

3. (Original) The method of milling cerium compound according to claim 1, wherein the cerium compound is cerium oxide.

4. (Currently Amended) The method of milling cerium compound according to claim 1, wherein the ball mill container is rotated at a rotational speed ~~which is 10% or more of N_c ,~~ that is from 10% to 50% of the critical rotational speed N_c .

5. (Original) The method of milling cerium compound according to claim 1, wherein the radius r of the ball mill container is 5 to 50 cm.
6. (Original) The method of milling cerium compound according to claim 1, wherein the milling medium is partially stabilized zirconia ball.
7. (Original) The method of milling cerium compound according to claim 1, wherein the milling medium has a diameter of 0.3 to 25 mm.
8. (Currently Amended) The method of milling cerium compound according to ~~claim 1, claim 3,~~ wherein zirconium is used in an amount of 100 ppm to 10000 ppm based on ~~the cerium compound in terms of cerium (IV) oxide~~
9. (Currently Amended) The method of milling cerium compound according to claim 1, ~~wherein a water-soluble alkaline silicate is added, pH of a slurry containing the cerium compound is adjusted to 8 to 13, and then a wet milling is carried out to obtain cerium compound covered with amorphous silica.~~ further comprising:
providing a water-soluble alkaline silicate; and
adjusting the pH of the resulting slurry containing the cerium compound to a pH from 8 to 13, wherein milling is carried out as a wet process to obtain the cerium compound covered with amorphous silica.
10. (Original) The method of milling cerium compound according to claim 9, wherein the water-soluble alkaline silicate is lithium silicate, sodium silicate, potassium silicate or quaternary ammonium hydroxide silicate.
11. (Withdrawn) A method of producing a slurry of cerium compound from an aqueous or organic solvent medium containing cerium compound by means of a ball mill using a milling medium, characterized in that ratio H_b/r of radius r of a cylindrical ball mill container and depth H_b of the milling medium in the ball mill container disposed horizontally

ranges from 1.2 to 1.9, and the ball mill container is rotated at a rotational speed which is 50% or less of critical rotational speed $N_c = 299/r^{1/2}$ of the ball mill container using the radius r expressed in centimeter.

12. (New) The method of milling cerium compound according to claim 1, wherein the milling of the cerium compound is carried out as a dry process.